

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A process for the preparation of monochloroacetic acid from chlorine and acetic acid in the presence of a catalyst by reactive distillation.
2. (Currently Amended) A ~~The process according to claim 1 wherein claim 1,~~ wherein the reactive distillation is conducted in a reactive distillation apparatus ~~is used, the apparatus comprising that comprises:~~

\_\_\_\_\_ a reactive distillation column;

\_\_\_\_\_ a cooler unit, and

\_\_\_\_\_ a reboiler;

wherein the reactive distillation column comprises ~~comprising~~ at least one column internal, which column ~~internal~~ is on one side connected to ~~a~~ the cooler unit and on the other side connected to ~~a~~ the reboiler, and ~~which~~

wherein the reactive distillation apparatus is provided with a first inlet for supplying chlorine, a second inlet for supplying acetic acid, a third inlet for supplying the catalyst, a first outlet for removing the ~~MCA-containing~~ monochloroacetic acid-containing product, and a second outlet for recovering the catalyst, whereby the first inlet and the ~~first~~ outlet are positioned closer to the reboiler than the second and the third inlets, and whereby the second outlet is connected to the cooler unit; and

wherein the process ~~comprising the steps of~~ comprises

\_\_\_\_\_ supplying chlorine via the first inlet,

\_\_\_\_\_ supplying acetic acid via the second inlet,

\_\_\_\_\_ supplying the catalyst via the third inlet,

\_\_\_\_\_ recovering the catalyst via the second outlet, and

removing the MCA-containing monochloroacetic acid-containing product via the first outlet.

3. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein a catalyst is acetyl chloride.

4. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein a applied pressure is at least  $0.5 \cdot 10^5$  and at most  $10 \cdot 10^5$  Pa.

5. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein a mass ratio of chlorine to acetic acid is at least 0.1 and at most 2.0.

6. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein the catalyst is acetic anhydride and a mass ratio of acetic anhydride to acetic acid is at least 0.0001 and at most 0.25.

7. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein the column internal is a tray, whereby the number of trays is at least 1 and at most 80.

8. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein a liquid residence time in the reactive distillation column is at least 0.1 and at most 5 hours.

9. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 2 wherein the claim 2, wherein the second inlet is positioned close to the cooler unit.

10. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein the process is conducted continuously.

11. (Currently Amended) A-The process according to claim 1 wherein the claim 1, wherein a diluting gas is added, the diluting gas being selected from the group consisting of hydrochloric acid, an inert gas such as nitrogen or helium, or and a mixture thereof.

12. (New) The process according to claim 11, wherein the inert gas is selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, helium and mixtures thereof.